

## **False Teachers and Their Destructive Heresies (*Part 2*)**

### ***2 Peter 2:1-3***

**Thought for the Day:** There are many so-called preachers and teachers today who claim to be spokesmen for God, but in fact, they are false teachers leading their listeners to eternal damnation by means of their destructive teachings.

Chapter two of 2 Peter is really the heart of the book in which Peter addresses the issue of false teachers and their destructive teachings. False teachers were arising *within* the churches and leading people astray, and it was Peter's great concern that believers be able to recognize these teachers and discern their false teachings. We, too, are being confronted by many false teachers and teachings in the Church today, and we, too, need to be able to identify *them* and *their false teachings* (2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Two Peter 2:1-3 is an Introduction and Summary Statement of the entire chapter dealing with false teachers and their teachings.

#### **I. The Reality of False Prophets (2:1a)**

##### **1 But false prophets also arose among the people...**

- The true prophets of God revealed the truth of God which they received directly from the Spirit of God and faithfully delivered to the people of God.
- The false prophets claimed to be speaking for God, but they delivered lies and myths which they fabricated in their own, evil hearts and minds; they told the people what they wanted to hear.

##### **... just as there will be false teachers among you...**

- "Among you" indicates the origin of these teachers.
- Just as there were false prophets who arose from among the people of God in the O.T., so there were false teachers who arose from among the believers in the Church.
- Jesus warned of false prophets and teachers that would arise within the Church. (Matthew 7:15-16; 24:11; Mark 13:22-23)
- The Apostle Paul also warned of false teachers and he described them as "fierce wolves [who] will come in among you, not sparing the flock." They will speak "twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them." (Acts 20:28-30)
  - The antidote for false teaching is "the whole counsel of God" and "the word of [God's] grace," the Word of God.
  - Paul warned that the false teachers will "disguise themselves as servants of righteousness" even as "Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:12-15; 1 Timoth 4:1-2)
- The Apostle John warned that "many antichrists have come. . . They went out from us, but they were not of us" (1 John 2:18-24) and "Many deceivers have gone out into the world" (2 John 7-10).
- The entire letter of Jude (half-brother of Jesus) was written to warn of false teachers.

#### **II. The Teachings of False Prophets (2:1b)**

##### **...who will secretly bring in destructive heresies...**

"Destructive heresies": Teachings that are destructive of people's faith in the Lord & His Word.

- Peter uses the words "destructive" and "destruction" three times in these three verses: The Lord Jesus Christ said concerning the devil: He is a liar, a thief, and a *destroyer*.
- His agents are also liars, thieves and *destroyers*, and in the end, they too will be *destroyed*, just like their father, the devil!
- "Coming from within the churches, they worked to secretly *bring in* (the Greek word also means "to smuggle") *destructive* opinions. These false teachers knowingly sought to turn people away from the truth by working subversively to bring false teaching that would only lead to destruction and judgment. They introduced it carefully, at first bringing it alongside the gospel message, as a mere aside or addition. But any deviation from the truth is no longer the truth." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)
- False teachers slowly bring in the false alongside the true, and then systematically subvert and replace the true with the false.

### **...even denying the Master who bought them...**

- The Master is the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The word "deny" means "to contradict, reject, or disavow."
  - Some denied that Jesus Christ was God. Others denied that He was a human being.
  - Still others denied His lordship by disobeying His teachings and practicing immorality; we can engage in sexual immorality and it doesn't affect our relationship with God.
  - And still others denigrated the significance of His life, death, and resurrection—the very heart of the Gospel—the very means of our salvation.
- These false teachers were not Christians who lost or rejected their salvation. Rather, Christ's death on the cross was *sufficient* to pay the price for their salvation, but it was not *efficient* because they rejected Him and His sacrifice as the means of their salvation.

### **III. The Fate of False Prophets (2:1c, 3b)**

**...bringing upon themselves swift destruction. . . Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.**

- The fate of false teachers is condemnation and destruction. (Revelation 20:15; cp. vs. 10)

### **IV. The Danger of False Prophets (2:2-3a)**

**2 And many will follow their sensuality / shameful ways, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.**

- Christianity and Christian teaching will be "held in contempt by many because of the immoral behavior of professing Christians." (*NKJV Study Bible, p. 2132*)

**3 And in their greed they will exploit you with false words...**

- "False teachers throughout history have been marked by sexual sin, a lust for money, and dishonesty. All such teachers [and their followers] face condemnation and destruction." (*ESV Study Bible, p. 2420*)
- "Teachers should be paid by the people they teach, but these false teachers were attempting to make more money by distorting the truth and saying what people wanted to hear. They were more interested in making money than in teaching truth..." (*LASB, p. 2695*)

**The onus is on us to know God's Word so well  
that we are able to recognize false teachers and their false doctrines.**